LITERATURE AND ETHICS

What in relation to fields we call rotation of crops we call the "cyclic phase of the manic-depressive psychosis" in a man.

Everything that has ever happened within us, even if only once, can reappear, time aiding and the will not intervening. (There is never, in the realm of morals, any definitive victory.)

The only things we are sure of never doing are those which we don't understand. The self-confidence of your virtue annoys me because it is made up of incomprehension. I am not speaking of the intelligence of the brain, mere logic, which understands nothing but relationships among symbols; I want nothing to do with it. We understand only what we are capable of doing; thus in nature objects vibrate at the approach of sound only when they themselves, touched by a shock, are capable of producing sound. And I do not say that they will necessarily ever produce it; but this is the source of their indulgence, their excuse for a possible eventuality.

Nil humanum a me alienum puto.[15]

"There are no crimes, however great, that on certain days I have not felt capable of committing," Goethe said. The greatest minds are also the most capable of great crimes, which they generally do not commit, because of wisdom, because of love, or because they would limit themselves by so doing.

Doctrine of sin: being capable of all evil and committing none; that is the definition of good. I do not like this merely negative exercise of the will. I prefer that blindness to evil should result from being dazzled by the good; otherwise virtue is ignorance—poverty.

I can no more be grateful to God for having created

me than I could hold it against him for my not existing — if I did not exist.

Et sic Deus semel jussit, semper paret, ™
God "who is faithful." The miracles are God's acts of disobedience.

[15] The famous line from Act I of Terence's comedy: *The Man Who Punished Himself:* "I am a man: I consider nothing human as foreign to me."

[16] The exact quotation reads: *<ellle ipse omnium conditor et rector scripsit quidem fata, sed sequitur; semper paret, semel jussit.* — He himself, author and ruler of all things, wrote the fates, but he also follows them; he obeys forever, and yet but once ordained." (Seneca: *De Providentia,* V, 8.)